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It's question time for CensusAtSchool

The questionnaire stage of CensusAtSchool is now open.

CensusAtSchool is an online learning project involving Australian school students from Years 5 to 12. It is sponsored by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and is designed to show students that statistics can be fun as well as educational.

Students from 2,100 schools across Australia have registered for CensusAtSchool. The students involved will be filling in a questionnaire online. The questions are non-intrusive and deal with such things as height, what a student had for breakfast, favourite music and the like.

It is not too late for new schools to sign up to the project. The questionnaire stage remains open until 7 July and new schools can register over that period.

The data usage stage starts on 11 July. During this phase the students, under the direction of their teachers, will tap into the statistical resource that has been built up during the questionnaire stage. They will use information that is relevant to them in their class activities.

Students can access the data to make comparisons between themselves and other sets of students in different parts of Australia. They can compare how they are alike and how they differ.

As with the national Census, which will take place on 8 August, no individual will be able to be identified in the program. The strictest Internet security will be in place.

CensusAtSchool has the strong backing of both public and private educational bodies in all States and Territories. One of the aims of the project is to increase statistical literacy amongst students. It is also hoped that some will consider the possibility of future careers in statistics.

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